

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 VIENNA 08875 271557Z

44

ACTION ACDA-19

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 318

SECDEF/WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO

S E C R E T VIENNA 8875

FROM US REP MBFR

EO: 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJ: MBFR

REF: USNATO 5178; STATE 211555

1. SUMMARY. WE GREATLY APPRECIATE EXCELLENT NEW WASHINGTON MEMORANDUM ON DATA WHICH SHOULD PROVIDE BASIS FOR RAPID ALLIED AGREEMENT. WE ALSO APPRECIATE GOOD FOOTWORK OF USNATO IN BRINGING ABOUT SPC AGREEMENT REPORTED IN USNATO 5178 TO RECOMMEND TO GOVERNMENTS ACCEPTANCE OF NEW OVERALL US FIGURES. NOW THAT SPC HAS AGREED TO USE NEW FIGURES, WITH REASONABLE PROSPECT OF AGREEMENT BY CAPITALS, STAGE IS SET FOR ESSENTIAL NEXT STEP OF OBTAINING ALLIED AGREEMENT TO PUBLIC RELEASE OF AGREED DATA IN TIME FOR USE ON OCTOBER 31 AT LATEST. THE PENDING DISCUSSION OF NEW US MEMORANDUM ON DATA IN SPC IN OCTOBER 29 MEETING SHOULD PROVE A SERVICEABLE VEHICLE TO ACHIEVE THIS AIM. WE ASSUME THAT ON THE BASIS OF EXISTING WASHINGTON INSTRUCTIONS, USNATO WILL IN FACT

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 VIENNA 08875 271557Z

SEEK TO USE MEETING FOR THIS PURPOSE. DEPARTMENT, USNATO AND

OTHER ADDRESSEE POSTS, MAY WISH TO DRAW ON CONSIDERATIONS BELOW.

END SUMMARY.

2. ALTHOUGH IT IS A POSITIVE MOVE THAT ALLIES ARE AGREEING TO USE NEW US DATA IN MBFR NEGOTIATIONS, A FURTHER ALLIED DECISION APPEARS NECESSARY TO MEET THE ACTUAL TACTICAL SITUATION IN VIENNA.

3. IN GENERAL, IF THE ALLIES ARE IN FACT AGREED THAT THESE NEW FIGURES CAN BE USED IN THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS, TACTICAL DECISIONS ON HOW TO MAKE MOSE EFFECTIVE USE OF THEM, AND THE TIMING OF SUCH USE, SHOULD BE LEFT TO THE NEGOTIATORS ON THE SPOT.

4. WE EXPECT A CONSIDERABLE WESTERN PRESS INTEREST IN THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS, AND ALL ALLIES RECOGNIZE THAT PUBLIC OPINION SUPPORT FOR THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS IS ESSENTIAL TO THEIR SUCCESS.

5. ALL OF THE ALLIED OPENING STATEMENTS FOR PRESENTATION ON OCTOBER 30/31 CONTAIN EMPHASIS ON DISPARITIES BETWEEN NATO AND THE WARSAW PACT IN MANPOWER AND IN TANKS.

6. IT IS NEARLY CERTAIN IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT THE ALLIED PRESS SPOKESMAN AND THE INDIVIDUAL ALLIED HEADS OF DELEGATION WILL BE ASKED POINTED QUESTIONS CONCERNING NATO AND WARSAW PACT TROOP STRENGTH IN PRESS DISCUSSIONS FOLLOWING THE OPENING STATEMENTS. SUCH QUESTIONS HAVE ALREADY BEEN POSED BY WESTERN JOURNALISTS ARRIVING IN VIENNA.

7. FOR ALLIED SPOKESMAN OR DELEGATION HEADS TO TEMPORIZE OR SHOW RELUCTANCE IN ANSWERING PRESS QUESTIONS ON FORCE LEVELS IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE OPENING OF A MAJOR NEGOTIATION ON FORCE LEVELS FOR WHICH THE ALLIANCE HAVE PREPARED FOR FOUR YEARS, WOULD CREATE AN UNFORTUNATE IMPRESSION OF UMPREPAREDNESS AND LACK OF SERIOUSNESS ON THE PART OF THE ALLIANCE. THIS COULD DO DAMAGE TO THE REPUTATION OF NATO AND THE ALLIED POSITION ON MBFR IN THE EYES OF THOSE HIGHLY PROFESSIONAL WESTERN JOURNALISTS ON WHOSE SUPPORT ALLIES MUST COUNT IN THE FUTURE.

8. THE CURRENT POSITION IN THE SPC THAT THE ALLIES SHOULD REFER TO IISS FIGURES IS INADEQUATE IN THE LIGHT OF THE ACTUAL TACTICAL

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 VIENNA 08875 271557Z

SITUATION IN VIENNA. THE ALLIES CANNOT USE A SET OF FIGURES WHICH IS INACCURATE ACCORDING TO BEST ESTIMATES WITHOUT ENDANGERING THEIR CREDIBILITY WITH THE WESTERN PRESS AND POTENTIALLY DAMAGING THEIR NEGOTIATING POSITIONS WITH THE SOVIETS IN LATER PHASES OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

9. EQUALLY, THE ALLIES CANNOT SATISFACTORILY MEET PRESS INTEREST WITH THE USE OF RATIOS, SOME OF WHICH CREATE A MISLEADING IMPRES-

SION. THE TROUBLE WITH RATIOS IS THAT THEY ONLY POSTPONE BY ONE STEP THE ASKING OF QUESTIONS ABOUT ACTUAL FIGURES, WITH THE UNFORTUNATE RESULTS ALREADY DESCRIBED IF THE ALLIES ARE UNWILLING AND UNPREPARED TO GIVE AT LEAST SOME SPECIFICS.

10. THERE HAS ALREADY BEEN SOME DISCUSSION IN THE AD HOC GROUP OF THE POINT AT WHICH THE ALLIES MAY WISH TO USE DATA WITH THE SOVIETS. NO FORMAL DECISION HAS YET BEEN TAKEN IN THIS MATTER BUT THERE SEEMS TO BE AGREEMENT THAT THE ALLIES WOULD NOT PLAN TO USE SPECIFIC DATA WITH THE EAST UNTIL THEY ARE WELL INTO THE STEP OF DEVELOPMENT OF THEMES AND THE SOVIETS HAVE PERHAPS CHALLENGED THE GENERAL ALLIED PRESENTATIONS IN ADJECTIVAL TERMS ON FORCE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST.

11. WE CANNOT WAIT TO MEET PRESENT PUBLIC INFORMATION NEEDS UNTIL THIS STAGE IS REACHED WITHOUT CREATING AN UNFORTUNATE PUBLIC IMPRESSION.

12. HOWEVER, ANY FIGURES USED FOR BACKGROUNDING PURPOSES NOW SHOULD BE THOSE WHICH WE INTEND TO USE LATER WITH THE EAST.

13. THEIR USE AFTER OCTOBER 31 FOR BACKGROUNDING AND POSSIBLE PUBLICATION WILL NOT IMPEDE OUR CURRENT PLANNING FOR THE GRADUAL INTRODUCTION OF MORE DETAILED DATA INTO THE DISCUSSION LATER IN THE STEP OF DEVELOPMENT OF THEMES. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE EAST WILL CHOOSE AT THE OUTSET TO RESPOND AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE TO BUY WESTERN FIGURES WHICH MAY BE PUBLISHED. BUT IN ANY EVENT, WE SEE NO NEED TO BE RETICENT ABOUT OUR FIGURES. A CLEAR AND DETERMINED USE OF THEM WITH THE EAST WILL BE AN ESSENTIAL ASPECT OF THE ALLIED NEGOTIATING APPROACH ON REDUCTIONS AND THE FEW FIGURES WE CONTEMPLATE USING NOW ARE NEEDED TO OBTAIN PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE OVERALL ALLIED POSITION.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 VIENNA 08875 271557Z

14. HENCE WE BELIEVE THE SPC SHOULD IN ITS OCTOBER 29 SESSION RECOMMEND TO GOVERNMENTS THAT THEY AGREE TO USE OF THESE FIGURES BY ALLIED SPOKESMEN ON OCTOBER 31.HUMES

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